

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
OF HILPERTON PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, WHADDON LANE, HILPERTON,  
at 7.30 pm on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2005**

There were two members of the public present.

**PRESENT**

- Mr. E. Clark (in the Chair)
- Mrs. S. Sawyer
- Mr. R. House
- Mr. K. Jackson
- Mr. B. Cullern
- Mrs. C. Beckett
- Mrs. K. Hayes
- Mr. D. Drewett
- Mr. J. Willis
- Mr. V. Bielecki
- Mr. M. Duff

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor S. Content and P.C. Lungu (both for part of the meeting only)

**1a. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Mr. E. Clark was re-elected Chairman  
(Proposed by Mr. Willis, seconded by Mrs. Sawyer, all in favour)  
The Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**1b. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Mr. R. House was re-elected Vice-Chairman  
(Proposed by Mr. Willis, seconded by Mrs. Sawyer, all in favour)

**2. APPOINTMENT OF PLANNING COMMITTEE AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES**

**Planning Committee:** Mr. R. House, Mrs. S. Sawyer, Mr. J. Willis, Mr. D. Tucker, Mrs. K. Hayes, Mr. K. Jackson and Mr. E. Clark (ex officio).

**Footpath Representative:** Mrs. C. Beckett

**School Governors:** a) Hilperton Primary School – Mrs. P. Turner  
b) The Mead Primary School – Mrs. J. Sinclair

**Police Representative:** Mr. J. Willis

**Village Hall Committee Representative:** Mr. E. Clark (ex officio)

**Paxcroft Mead Community Centre Representative:** Mr. B. Cullern

**Parish Lengthsmen Co-ordinator:** No appointment made – the Clerk to continue to liaise with the Wiltshire Highways Partnership until early in 2006 when Mr. Willis may be in a position to become the co-ordinator

**Flowers at the War Memorial:** Mrs. L. House

**3.. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies.

#### **4. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL/PREJUDICIAL INTEREST**

Planning application: 05/00822/FUL: Mr. E. Clark (personal as his boys are involved with the junior section)

#### **5. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2005, and the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2005, were approved and signed. The Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2005, were noted.

#### **6. MATTERS ARISING (from the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of the 19<sup>th</sup> April)**

Minute 7 – War Memorial: The Clerk said that the grant application had been prepared by her and submitted, and an acknowledgement had been received. She had also ordered a wreath for the VE/VJ day celebrations.

Minute 7 – Hammond Way: The Clerk reported that the Landscape Officer at WWDC, Chris Kirk, was about to leave the authority to take up a post in Poole. He had advised her that, although he had indicated that the District Council would take over the play area in its current state, Hammond Way was still a complete shambles, vandalism was rife, and he would be advising the District Council that the only option open to them would be to take action against the developers, Wimpey Homes. In his opinion the Parish Council should delay ordering any new play equipment. It was therefore agreed to take Mr. Kirk's advice.

Minute 7 – Notice Board: The Clerk had spoken to the manager of Marsh Stores and had ordered a new notice board. The only possible positioning of the board on the shop wall would be at the side of the building in the same place as the present notice board, but it was suggested it could be put on posts in a more prominent position. The Clerk said she would go back to the manager and have a word with him.

Minute 7 - Footpath 1, St. Michael and All Angels: The Clerk had been informed by the Rights of Way officer that the path by the church had not yet been surfaced with wood chippings because the chipper had broken down. As soon as it was mended the job would be done.

Minute 7 – Wiltshire Highways Partnership presentation: Both the Chairman and Mr. Tucker had attended the presentation held on the 11<sup>th</sup> May and found it interesting to hear about the plans for the future, problems over lack of resources, sharing of equipment throughout the county etc. Mr. Tucker had mentioned the problems with Whaddon Lane and had been told that the road had gone past the state of being top-dressed and needed major repairs. Unfortunately this would not be done in the near future as the lane was not classed as a top priority in terms of county-wide funding.

Minute 12a: The posts by Dymott Square had now been replaced and the manhole by Mrs. Sawyer's house had been 'blasted' through and the cover and frame cleaned and re-seated.

Minute 12c: The Rights of Way Warden had contacted the owners of the public house to inform them of their responsibilities and it now appeared that the hedge had been cut back to enable the public to use the path freely. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the manager of the pub to thank him for acting so quickly. Discussion took place on the grassed area nearby and it was suggested that the Parish Lengthsmen could be asked to cut it back on their next visit.

#### **7. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR**

a) The Chairman introduced Sarah Content as the new county councillor for Holt and Paxcroft Division.

b) The Clerk had just received another set of revised plans from WWDC relating to Marshgate Investments' planning application to construct 3 retail units and 11 flats at Hackett Place. As before, she had a short time limit to send back the Parish Council's thoughts on the new plans. These latest plans included letters from engineers and architects stating that the proposed and existing site levels were sufficiently in excess of the 1/100 year flood plain. A short discussion followed and it was agreed

that the Parish Council's objection on this issue should remain the same, i.e. there was a risk of flooding, the site being within the 100 year flood line, this information being in accordance with the old Paxcroft Mead master plan. It should be further added that the Parish Council was not in a position to comment on the statements made by the engineers and architects, but no doubt the Environment Agency would be responding to them.

## **8. COUNTY COUNCILLOR, DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND POLICE**

### *County Report*

Sarah Content introduced herself as the new county councillor and thanked her predecessor, Trevor Carbin, for his efforts over the past four years. She tabled a Holt and Paxcroft Parish Report for May and this is held on file. Mrs. Content informed the meeting that Jane Scott had been re-elected Leader of Wiltshire County Council. She assured members of the Parish Council that she would work hard on behalf of the parish over the years she would be in office.

### *District Report*

a) The Chairman reported that last week the leader of WWDC had been dismissed by the Liberal Democrat group (plus five others). The new leader of the council was Sarah Content and she had now chosen her cabinet members, committee members and representatives on outside bodies.

b) Mr. Clark had been informed earlier in the day by the planning officer dealing with the Persimmon application that The Gap road was not going to be called in by the Government Office for the South-West. They had therefore lifted the article 14 direction and WWDC were now free to complete work on the Section 106 agreements.

### *Police Report*

P.C. Lungu had come to the meeting in place of his colleague P.C. Fox. He said that there had been fifteen crimes in the Hilperton area over the past two months, ten of which had been detected so far. Most of the crimes centred around the Towpath area and included thefts, damage to property and child neglect.

## **9. ITEMS FOR REPORT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Annual Parish Assembly**

a) Grass Cutting: It had been pointed out at the Parish Assembly that the grass in the village was not cut as often as it should be, and a suggestion had been made that the Parish Council might use some of its funds to get a contractor in. The Chairman had already explained that residents paid for this in their council tax and so, effectively, if the Parish Council brought in a contractor to do additional grass cutting, this would mean that they would be doubly taxed. After a short discussion it was agreed that the best way forward was to keep pressure on the local authority and to let people have details - via the PC newsletter - of CLARENCE so that they could report defects themselves.

Mrs. Beckett said that the grass verges on Paxcroft Mead were very overgrown and she was concerned at the height of the bushes around the underpass. It was agreed that this should be reported to WWDC. Mr. Cullern added that the area immediately around the traffic furniture on Paxcroft Mead needed clearing of weeds and this should be reported as well.

b) Whaddon Lane – Pedestrian Refuges: These had been put in during 2004 but did not appear to be very well maintained. It was agreed that this was a job which could be undertaken by the Parish Lengthsmen on their next visit but, as this was a safety issue, it should be reported to WCC. Sarah Content was asked to look into this matter.

c) Cemetery Garden: Mrs. Sawyer had reported that the part of the cemetery reserved for the burying of ashes was in a sorry state, the garden part being choked with weeds and not maintained or weeded properly. The bed behind was completely out of hand with runners spreading all over the place and nothing being cut back. The Clerk said she would raise this matter with WWDC.

d) Vandalism on Paxcroft Mead: The Clerk had reported the incidences of graffiti to WWDC's new community safety officer, who had in turn passed her letter to the District Council's social behaviour reduction officer. She said she would liaise with the local police and, in the meantime, she had enclosed a log sheet for filling in should any further incidents occur.

e) Closure of the Post Office: The imminent closure of Hilperton Post Office was causing concern in the village and the possibility of some sort of part-time post office had been discussed. The difficulty was that Hilperton Post Office was classed as 'urban' and as such must be open five and a half days a week. The Post Office would have to be re-graded to 'rural' before a part-time service could be established and then it could be run from, for example, the Village Hall or some privately owned establishment.

Mr. Duff said that just this week a consultation process had begun and that Post Watch would investigate what was required in the village. Groups involved should make a written submission to the Post Office and Post Watch for a facility in the future to be made available, and if the Parish Council could come up with a solution for a venue (e.g. the Village Hall) so that the Post Office had somewhere to look at and consider, this would be helpful. It was important for the classification of the Post Office to be changed from 'urban' to 'rural' and to show that there was a demand for a postal service in the village.

It was agreed that the Chairman and the Clerk should liaise and send a suitable letter to Post Watch and the Post Office, bearing in mind the following:-

- a) There are approximately 100 pensioners in the village who use the post office.
- b) Local buses do not go by Hilperton Marsh post office.
- c) A number of people in the village have problems with mobility.
- d) There would be an environmental impact if people had to use cars to get to their nearest post office, rather than walk.
- e) The Village Hall may be a suitable alternative venue.

f) Car parking outside the Post Office: The Clerk said she would report the problem over cars parking near the Post Office on double yellow lines.

### **Future of land between Hilperton and the proposed Relief Road**

It was agreed that the land between the village and the proposed road should be preserved, if at all possible, as open land, maybe in the form of a nature reserve, this being preferable to it being used for recreation purposes or, in the worst possible scenario, for housing. Persimmon would buy as little land as possible in order to build a road and leave the rest on an option to purchase from the landowners. With the developers having the first option on any land it would in all probability be prohibitively expensive for anyone else to purchase.

The Chairman said that there were two landowners, the first being an individual and the second a family trust. After some discussion it was agreed that the Chairman, Mrs. Beckett and the Clerk should consult with the major landowner and arrange a meeting with him to see if there was any possibility of moving forward on this matter to the benefit of the village, bearing in mind that the District Plan would be up for review in the not-too-distant future.

### **Current Ownership and Sale to Persimmon of land at the corner of Wyke Road/Horse Road**

There was uncertainty over who owned the former Stokes Nursery at the corner of Wyke Road and Horse Road, although it was understood that the County Council had purchased 118 Wyke Road some years ago for highway improvement purposes.

It was believed that it was the responsibility of the County Council, if the former nursery site belonged to them, to obtain the best possible price on selling it and there was a worry that this land might have been 'handed over' to the developers planning to construct the relief road.

After a short discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should endeavour to find out who owned the old nursery site.

### **Review of the Model Code of Conduct**

It had been agreed at the last meeting that the Parish Council should respond to the review of the Model Code of Conduct, and the Clerk had sent members copies of the introduction to the review, together with copies of Simon Best's document 'Declarations of Interest – a Quick Reminder'. The introduction contained twenty-nine questions covering the range of areas known to be of most concern, and the Clerk read out each one of them, with members giving their answers. These are held on file and the Clerk said she would send the responses to the Standards Board for England before the deadline of the 17<sup>th</sup> June.

In addition, the Clerk said that she had been invited to attend the latest meeting of WWDC's Standards Committee a few weeks ago and had spoken about the impact of the dispensations granted regarding the relief road application and the impact of the dispensation itself on the councillors and council business. The Clerk to Westbury Town Council was also in attendance, as Westbury had experienced similar problems over the matter of dispensations regarding the Westbury relief road. Members of the Standards Committee were sympathetic to the views of both Clerks and agreed that on matters such as these, which affected everyone in the village/town, all elected councillors should be able to take part in any discussion, particularly as town and parish councils were consultees and not the decision makers. They would also be responding to the review of the Code of Conduct and would make these feelings known.

### **Parish Council Dog Warden/Request for further Litter Bins on Paxcroft Mead**

The Chairman said he had done nothing further regarding the matter of a dog warden for Hilperton and it was agreed that this should be discussed further at the June meeting. Mr. Bielecki had walked around the area where more litter bins had been requested and felt (and this was also the feeling of most parish councillors) that both the Parish Council and the District Council had supplied more than enough bins over the last couple of years in the vicinity of Budgens and the Community Centre.

The Clerk referred to the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill which had now achieved Royal Assent and was presently going through the parliamentary process.

### **Trowbridge Community Area Future – Appointment of Project Officer**

The Trowbridge Community Area Future Partnership was seeking to employ a project officer on a part-time basis, for three years initially, to drive forward their action plans and projects. As far as the eleven parishes in the area were concerned, each was being asked to commit £200 for each of the three years towards the funding of the project officer. After a short discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council should respond to the effect that it was not in a position to assist financially.

### **WCC – School Transport to Non-Designated Schools**

A letter had been received (prior to the county council elections) from District Councillors Terry Chivers and Sarah Content concerning a decision taken by WCC regarding the issue of school transport to non designated schools. The Clerk read out the gist of the letter, which was noted.

### **St. John Ambulance – Request for a Grant**

At the end of 2005 the Headquarters of St. John Ambulance Wiltshire would be moving from its current home in a grade two listed building in the centre of Devizes to modern premises on the Hopton Estate on the outskirts of the town. The new building, the fund-raisers said, would be of great benefit to volunteers and, through them, to the people of Wiltshire, and would save money in the long-term, but in the short-term £420,000 needed to be raised to build and equip the new premises.

Hilperton Parish Council, along with all the others in the county, was being asked if it would be prepared to help in the form of buying a brick for the new HQ which could be engraved with the name of the village and would be displayed in the foyer of the new building. The bricks came in three sizes:- standard, double and super. After a short discussion it was agreed that a double brick should be donated, at a cost of £100, with the name of the Parish Council engraved on it. (Proposed by Mr. Willis, seconded by Mrs. Beckett, ten in favour and one abstention).

### **WWDC – Town and Parish Play Area Grant Scheme 2005-2006**

It was agreed that, in view of the problems with Hammond Way and the fact that the Parish Council had been successful in previous years in obtaining grants, no grant application would be made for the next financial year.

### **Hilperton Village Design Statement**

The Clerk had recently received an electronic copy of the Hilperton VDS from the Chairman of the committee, Eric Egar. He had informed her that over 2,000 copies had been printed and were in the process of being distributed to all houses in the parish.

Mr. Egar thanked the Parish Council for supporting his team in the project but there were a few questions he wanted to ask, namely:-

a) Could the Parish Council place the PDF file on its website for visitors to download?

The Clerk reported that this had already been done.

b) WWDC had asked the VDS team who should be the contact point for any matters that might come up in the future regarding the VDS. The team took on the work as a finite project and would therefore like to know if the Parish Council would take on the responsibility for reviewing the VDS if it became appropriate to do so and initiate any new actions that might be required.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would initiate any action necessary in respect of a future review of the VDS.

c) The original source materials and working papers of the project would be deposited with the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office and they had asked if these should be stored with papers relating to Hilperton Parish Council. Mr. Egar had explained to them that, although the VDS was not an official Parish Council document, the team was happy with this. Did the Parish Council have any objection.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would not object to this.

d) There would be approximately 400 printed documents left over after the house-to-house distribution and the VDS team wished to put them where they would be useful. Copies would be distributed to Parish, District and County Councillors and a number given to the planning authority, both for use by officers and as a stock for distribution to anyone intending developments in Hilperton. Would the Parish Council like to receive a stock of documents and, if so, how many?

It was agreed that 20 copies should be kept by the Clerk.

e) Did the Parish Council have any suggestions about who else might usefully be sent copies , e.g the local M.P.?

It was felt that schools in the area, plus the Village Hall and Paxcroft Community Centre should all receive copies of the VDS.

*At this point the time had reached 9.38 p.m. and it was agreed that the meeting should continue to enable all the agenda items to be addressed.*

## **10. PLANNING MATTERS**

### **Applications**

05/00770/TPO: Mr. and Mrs. Welch, 8 Stuart Close

Felling of a Horse Chestnut Tree

It was agreed that an objection should be made to this application. The tree in question was subject to a TPO and had great amenity value.

05/00822/FUL: Trowbridge Rugby Football Club and Caldecote Consultants

Land to the north of the A361, Devizes Road

Proposed rugby ground including clubhouse, groundsman's store, sports pitches with floodlighting and associated landscape bunding, access and parking.

The Chairman reminded members that a presentation had been given to the Parish Council towards the end of 2004 by the applicants, and a discussion took place on the plans put before them. As these stood at present there were a number of concerns:-

- a) The size and prominence of the clubhouse would be visually damaging to the landscape in its present form and setting.
- b) The location of the proposed rugby club would encourage the use of Devizes Road as a primary through route, as the application indicated that 75% of the traffic would come from Trowbridge. It was felt therefore that, in the interests of highway safety, Devizes Road should be physically closed to through traffic if the application was approved.
- c) It was felt that, if the District Council was minded to grant planning permission, the Parish Council would wish to see a condition imposed that the land in question should remain in perpetuity for recreational use only. Concern was expressed that the plans appeared to reflect a commercial venture rather than simply a rugby club.

Various other matters still needed to be addressed and it was agreed that the Clerk should write to the planning authority on behalf of the Parish Council, objecting to the application, but saying that the detailed reasons for the objection would be discussed at the Parish Council meeting to be held in June.

### **Decisions**

04/02065/FUL: Mr. and Mrs. Weaver, Maxcroft House, 3 Maxcroft Lane

Subdivision of existing house to form two dwellings - Refusal

04/02067/LBC: Mr. and Mrs. Weaver, Maxcroft House, 3 Maxcroft Lane

Internal and external alterations to separate Maxcroft House into two dwelling units and associated works - Consent

WCC/05/09006: Wiltshire County Council- Retention of a single mobile classroom with toilets at Hilperton CE Primary School - Permission given by WCC with conditions

## **11. CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

**12. PUBLICATIONS**

- a) Local Councils Review – May, 2005
- b) Clerks and Councils Direct – May, 2005
- c) Provisional Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11
- d) Community Area Highway Information 2005/2006
- e) Arts Directory

**13. ACCOUNTS**

Payments authorised:-

Clerk's Salary for May	£394.26)	
Clerk's Expenses) (including office rental)	£202.24)	£596.50
 Cornhill Insurance – annual premium		£810.57
 File-It Ltd. – Stationery (including £17.82 VAT)		£119.67
 Community First – Annual Subscription		£32.00
 St. John Ambulance – Section 137 Grant Approved earlier in the meeting		£100.00

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND VILLAGE MAINTENANCE**

- a) Mr. Duff reported an unstable lamp post on the footpath opposite Fieldways en route to Budgens (first on the left).
- b) Mrs. Hayes drew members' attention to the Provisional Wiltshire Local Transport Plan which had been tabled. Although the time limit for consultation (27<sup>th</sup> May) made it virtually impossible for the Parish Council to respond, individuals still had time to make their responses known and she gave out individual copies to all members of the Parish Council.
- c) Mr. Cullern was happy to report that gutters had been cleared and roads swept in the vicinity of Helpswell Road/Cresswell Drive.
- d) Mrs. Beckett drew members' attention to a recent accident in the village.
- e) Mr. Jackson, on behalf of the Parish Councils' Liaison Group, reminded members of the potential link on the PC website to Trowbridge and it was agreed that this should be followed up via the Chairman.

**15. ITEMS FOR PARISH NEWS/LOCAL PRESS**

- a) Appointment of officers of the Parish Council and dates of forthcoming meetings.
- b) Details of CLARENCE for members of the public to report highway defects etc.
- c) Information regarding the closure of the Post Office in Hilperton and the consultation process.

**16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2005**

**The meeting ended at 10.10 p.m.**

Signed ..... Date .....

